

Idanha Hotel
928 Main Street
Boise
Ada County
Idaho

HABS No. ID-29

HABS

ID,
1-BOISE,
13-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HABS
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1-BOISE.
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

IDANHA HOTEL

HABS No. ID-29

Location: 10th & Main Streets, Boise, Ada County, Idaho
Latitude: 43°37'00" ; Longitude: 116°12'17"

Present Owner: Broadbent Development Company, 910 Main Street, Boise, Idaho 83702

Present Occupant: Idanha Hotel

Present Use: Hotel with coffee shop, barber shop, tailor shop, jewelry shop, and watch repair shop.

Significance: At the time of its completion, the Idanha Hotel was the most expensive structure ever built in Boise. It incorporated French Chateau style found in many Canadian and eastern U. S. hotels, and was the first commercial structure in Boise to have round corner turrets. The Idanha retains much of its original architectural character, reflecting the grandeur of the days when it was Boise's leading hotel.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: February 1900 to January 1901
2. Architect: Walter S. Campbell
3. Original and subsequent owners:

Legal description:

Idanha Hotel, Lot 1 of Block 1 and the westerly 27 feet of Lot 2 of Block 1 in the Boise City Original Townsite (Ada County Assessor's Office)

Chain of Title:

1871 Deed dated March 17, 1871, as recorded in Deed Book 5, page 396 (Lots 2, 3, 8, 9).
Charles Himrod (Mayor)
To
J. L. Morae.

- 1871 Deed dated March 31, 1871, as recorded in Deed Book 5, page 62 (Lot 1).
Charlea Himrod (Mayor)
To
C. W. Moore.
- 1877 Deed dated October 2, 1877, as recorded in Deed Book 7, page 450 (Lot 1).
C. W. Moore
To
M. H. Goodwin.
- 1878 Deed dated March 8, 1878, as recorded in Deed Book 7, page 604 (Lot 1).
M. H. Goodwin
To
Jamea W. Griffin.
- 1878 Deed dated July 26, 1878, as recorded in Deed Book 7, page 707 (Lot 1)
James W. Griffin
To
Peter Sonna, Ephraim Smith, and Jeremiah Brumback for First Presbyterian Church of Boise.
- 1880 Deed dated March 24, 1880, as recorded in Deed Book 8, page 408 (Lots 2, 3, 8, 9).
Jamea L. Morae
By attorney to
Henry Riddell.
- 1881 Deed dated December 2, 1881, as recorded in Deed Book 9, page 59 (Lots 2, 3, 8, 9).
Henry Riddell
To
Alexander Danskin and John M. Danskin.
- 1883 Deed dated April 18, 1883, as recorded in Deed Book 9, page 560 (Lots 2, 3, 4, 5, 6).
Alexander Danskin and John M. Danakin
To
Peter Sonna.
- 1893 Deed dated May 1, 1893, as recorded in Deed Book 27, page 307 (Lot 1).
First Prebyterian Church of Boiae
To
Peter Sonna.
- 1899 Deed dated November 28, 1899, aa recorded in Deed Book 34, page 578 (Lot 1 and westerly 5 feet of Lot 2 to center party wall of Sonna

Block).

Peter Sonna and Mary Sonna
To
Idanha Hotel Company, Ltd.

1902 Deed dated December 9, 1902, as recorded in Deed Book 46, page 112, (Easterly 22 feet of westerly 27 feet of Lot 2).

Peter Sonna and Mary Sonna
To
Idanha Hotel Company, Ltd.

1953 Deed dated May 26, 1953, Instrument No. 346690 (Easterly .80 feet of westerly 27 feet of Lot 2).

The Idanha Hotel Company
To
Broadbent Estate, Inc.

(Information above from Idaho Title Company and Ada County Recorder's Office.)

[Note: The Broadbent Development Company is in the process of paying off the stockholders of the Idanha Hotel Company and have controlling interest in that company. (Information from Mr. Jessa Jennison, Idanha Hotel manager, March 18, 1974).]

4. Builders, suppliers:

a. Builder: Mr. Gustafson did the basement walls, using sandstone from Krall's quarries, Boise. Louis Kieldaen of Boise did brickwork, using bricks from Salt Lake City. Young, Cavanaugh and Sullivan of Chicago did the stonework of the superstructure. (Information from Idaho Daily Statesman, January 1, 1901 and April 8, 1900.)

5. Original plans and construction: The original drawings are in the possession of Cline, Smull, Hamill Associates Chartered, Bank of Idaho Building, Idaho.

Construction followed the architect's plans almost completely.

6. In January, 1903, alterations were underway on the adjacent 22 feet of the Sonna Block on Main Street which had been annexed a month before for use as part of the hotel. The second and third floors were made into additional hotel rooms. Plans were made to raise this annex to the full height of the rest of the hotel, but this was never done. In 1906 a new \$5000 grille room

was completed. The following subsequent changes were mostly of a minor nature, with date and architects unknown:

Exterior:

Tenth Street Side: Modern front on jewelry store, a glass-enclosed sidewalk entrance to a lounge in the basement, a blocked arched window, a modern aluminum and glass entrance to the cafe and new aluminum frames for the other cafe windows.

North (Alley) Side: Three windows bricked in on first floor, two windows bricked in on second floor, and one window altered to a smaller size on rear of the Sonna annex, extending that structure to the alley. This structure adjoins the hotel.

Interior:

Basement: A tailor shop adjoins the barber shop where the billiard room was originally, and a lounge-bar occupies the area where the four sample rooms were. A women's rest room has been added off the hallway to the lounge. The men's rest room occupies the same spot as before but is now modified and made smaller. The boiler room is now a work shop, and the machine and work room is the hotel laundry center. The rest of the main basement is storage and employee lunch areas. Most of these areas are unaltered in basic design. The Sonna block annex basement connects to that of the main hotel and is utilized mainly for storage.

First Floor: A watch repair shop occupies the southwest corner of the lobby, and a jewelry store now occupies the southeast corner which was formerly occupied by the hotel's bar. The floor in this store has been lowered to sidewalk level, and the only access is from the street. The ladies' entrance on 10th Street has an aluminum and glass double-door entrance identical to that of the cafe entrance from the lounge. The first floor men's rest room, which was just north of the old bar off the lounge, is gone and two telephone booths are now in that approximate place. The old oak paneling and counter fronts in the lounge have been covered with modern paneling.

Second Floor: The old second floor meeting hall and dining room, which were on the west side, have been divided off to make more hotel rooms.

Third, fourth, fifth and sixth floors are basically

unaltered. Other alterations include a hook-up to steam heat from the central plant which is two buildings away in the center of the block, after the old boiler failed. New plumbing was also installed on the fifth and six floors.

Annex: The first floor of the Sonna Annex was for years the hotel coffee shop. Penny's Department Store, adjacent on the east side, has expanded to include this area as their shoe department. The second and third floors of the annex were converted to hotel rooms in 1903-1904.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The first commercial building in Boise to have round corner turrets, the Idanha is now one of the last to retain them. When first built, only three rooms in the entire structure were without windows; a concept now considered modern.
2. Condition of the fabric: Very good

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: 55' x 122' plus 22' of annex, three bays on the west, one on both the south and annex facades, six stories, rectangular in plan.
2. Foundations: Six-foot with concrete footings with concrete piers at stress points. Steel bearing plates and beams are used. Foundation walls are large sandstone blocks.
3. Wall Construction: Walls are of red brick construction, with cut stone lintels and trim. Galvanized iron ornamentation is used, especially on the turrets whose basic construction is of wooden frame on steel supports. Turrets are now painted gray.
4. Structural system, framing: Concrete supports, brick walls, wooden floor joists and struts supported by Steel beams and bearing plates constitute the main system.
5. Porches: Two iron balconies, over each main entrance, have been removed and replaced by lower metal marquees. A brick fire wall divides the building into north-south halves, and rises from basement to two feet above the roof. This wall is broken only at the main hallway of each floor. A small brick bulkhead covers the top of the

stairs and elevator shaft at the center of the east side of the roof.

6. Chimneys: Three brick chimneys, one larger and two smaller, rise from the east wall, with the larger being nearer the north wall. A small brick chimney is also placed on the north wall not far from the northwest corner.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Swinging front entrance doors are wooden-framed plate glass doors, flanked by narrow plate glass windows. Side entrance has two sets of double swinging doors, a recent modification of this entrance involving aluminum framing and plate glass. Rear service door is a double metal type. There is a small single door on the east side at the rear. The doors opening onto where the two balconies were are no longer used, of course.
 - b. Windows: All windows have stone lintels. Basement windows are double-hung sash with wooden frames. First floor window, other than large plate glass store front windows, are single-paned, 50" x 74" plate glass; those on the west side have round arches. Windows on the second, third and fourth floors are all double-hung sash, with two 34" x 36" panes of glass and wooden frames. Fifth floor windows are the same but are topped with round arches. Sixth floor windows are either tower windows of double-hung sash design with 24" x 36" glass or dormer windows of double-hung sash design with 36" x 22" glass. First floor windows of the Sonna block annex on Main Street are large solid plate with aluminum frames, as are the doors. Second floor windows are double-hung sash with keystone motif in the lintels. Third floor windows of the annex are the same except for a stone arch at the top.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Roof is of wooden frame construction, with rafter and struts. North and south thirds of roof slope gently to the center to allow run-off to drainspouts. Covering is built-up asbestos. A straight roof line effect is accomplished with battlements atop the mansard roof, which is covered with slate shingles.
 - b. Cornice: A galvanized iron cornice is used in conjunction with brick arranged in a dentil design.

- c. Dormers, towers: There are five small, hip-roofed dormers on the west side and two on the east. A round turret is placed at each corner (except the northeast) and provides a corner bay window for each floor except the first. Floor lines are marked by flared galvanized iron akirta on these turrets and two sets of bay windows of the west side.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Cellar: (proceeding clockwise from southwest corner): Barber shop, tailor shop, old air conditioner (still in use), storage room, lounge-bar, freight elevator, boiler room (used as work shop now), laundry rooms, storage rooms and men's rest room. The Sonna annex basement adjoins and is used for storage. A central corridor provided access to the rooms, and the stairs and elevator are centrally located.
- b. First floor: (proceeding clockwise from southwest corner): Watch repair shop, manager's desk, ladies entrance, cafe-coffee shop, kitchen, accessory rooms, public telephone booths, jewelry store (access from street only). The central lobby is at the front (south end) and the staircase and elevator are centrally located.
- c. Second floor: Main hall running north-south, with short easterly extension near each end. Proceeding clockwise from southwest corner: 9 hotel rooms, men's bathroom, storage closets, 2 hotel rooms, small storage closets, large storage room, one hotel room, stairs and elevator (at this point, a passageway connects annex to main structure; annex hall is "T-shaped" and has 6 hotel rooms of it), 2 hotel rooms, woman's bath and toilet, and 2 hotel rooms. Most rooms have private baths. Basic plan of main structure is original.
- d. Third floor: Similar to the second floor, this floor also has a "T-shaped" hallway and rooms in the annex. Proceeding clockwise from southwest corner: 10 hotel rooms, men's toilet, small storage room, 1 hotel room, storage room, 2 hotel rooms, stairs and elevator (at this point, the hallway runs into the annex where there are 2 hotel rooms, a storage closet and then 4 more hotel rooms), 2 hotel rooms, women's bathroom and 3 hotel rooms.
- e. Fourth floor: Same basic design but without the

annex. Proceeding clockwise from the southwest corner: 3 hotel rooms, bath-shower room, 6 hotel rooms, men's bathroom, 2 storage closets, 4 hotel rooms, elevator and stairs, 2 hotel rooms, women's bathroom and 3 hotel rooms.

f. Fifth floor: This floor is nearly the same as the fourth floor. Proceeding clockwise from southwest corner: 3 hotel rooms, bath-shower room, 6 hotel rooms, men's bathroom, 2 storage closets, 4 hotel rooms, elevator and stairs, 2 hotel rooms, women's bathroom and 3 hotel rooms.

g. Sixth floor: Proceeding clockwise from southwest corner: 3 hotel rooms, bath-shower

room, 6 hotel

rooms, men's bathroom, 2 small closets, 4 hotel rooms, doors to storage room and staircase to roof, elevator and stairs, 1 hotel room, fire escape (at east end of southern extension of hallway), 1 hotel room, women's bathroom and 1 hotel room.

2. Stairways: Central stairway from basement to roof utilizes quarter-turns and landings. Basement to first floor has 15 risers, landing, 8 risers; first floor to sixth floor stairs have 12 risers, landing, 8 risers; sixth floor to roof has 10 risers, landing, 10 risers. All are of wooden construction with carpeting. A 17-riser straight staircase with brass hand railing leads from lobby to basement. This does not correspond to the architect's drawings and is placed instead just to the north of the elevator shaft. This may or may not be original. Two other stairways from basement to the first floor which were shown in drawings were not found.
3. Flooring: Basement has concrete floor. First floor under kitchen area is concrete and corrugated iron (to be fireproof). Rest are 2" x 12" and 2" x 14" floor joists supported by steel bearing plates and 1" x 4" struts with hardwood tongue-and-groove flooring covered with carpet.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Originally plastered throughout with Laramie standard cement plaster, which is very hard. Now painted light pastel colors. Dining room and part of lobby are wallpapered in period wallpaper, as are many of the rooms.
5. Doorways and doors: Almost all are original five-paneled wooden doors. Most have transoms.
6. Decorative features: Notable features include the original newell posts, door trim, mopboards and other woodwork. Original brass and hardwood beds, bureaus,

deaks and other furniture are still in use.

7. Hardware: There are brass handrails on the stairway from the lobby to the basement. Period furnishings, lamps, clocks, wall phone, etc. have been added to the original lobby decor.
8. Mechanical equipment: Heating has been done by steam from central plant half a block away since the old boiler wore out. Lighting is incandescent. New plumbing has been installed on fifth and sixth floors. Air conditioning is by 12 evaporative cooler units on roof; lobby is cooled by old evaporative cooler in basement. Sprinkler system installed throughout.

D. Site:

1. General setting: The hotel is located in the downtown area of Boise which retains some old buildings along with the new and remodeled ones. Building is oriented north-south, with main entrance on south side.
2. There is no landscaping as the building occupies all of the property.

Prepared by: Thomas B. Renk
National Park Service
March 22, 1974

Edited by: Jack Barker, Jr.
Historic American Buildings
Survey
National Park Service
July 1984

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Original architectural drawings: The original drawings are in the possession of Cline, Smull, Hamill Associates Chartered, Bank of Idaho Building, Idaho. Prints of these original drawings are located at the State Historical Society archives and with the Historic American Buildings Survey.
- B. Photographs: The Idaho State Historical Society has a few old photographs of the Idanha. One, taken October 1907, shows Senator Borah during his balcony address. There are some other photos with only part of the building included, most of these taken from a great distance. Most others are old post cards or folders.

C. Interview: Telephone interview with Jess Jennison (manager of the Idanha), 2626 Lemp Street, Boise, Idaho, on March 18, 1974. Personal interview on March 22, 1974.

D. Bibliography:

1. Secondary and published sources:

Idaho Daily Statesman, November 26, 1899, p. 6, c. 3;
April 8, 1900, p. 4, c. 3; January 1, 1901, p. 4, c.
1-3; December 1906, Sec. 4, p. 1, c. 4; October 3, 1907,
p. 1 and 6.

The Idaho Sun, March 6, 1974, p. 8.